

William Caton

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~~Sent:~~ ~~Friday, April 04, 2003 3:34 PM~~
To: William Caton
Subject: Fwd: After the Durham hearing (Copy of note sent to fccinfo.gov)

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APR - 4 2003

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

---_Original Message-----

Date: 04/01/2003 05:33 pm -0500 (Tuesday)
From: Priscilla Murphy
To: Michael Copps
Subject: After the Durham hearing (Copy of note sent to fccinfo.gov)

(Being unsure whether email sent to the general fccinfo.gov address would actually reach you, I repost the following directly to you):

Thank you so much for coming to Durham yesterday. I watched the hearing all day on webcast and drove to Duke to speak (I was too late) in the afternoon.

Before I offer you my own comments, I would like to alert you to the fact that there seems to be something wrong with the ECFS comment page at fcc.gov, such that one can comment on the media ownership issue, but one's comment doesn't seem to go anywhere. Efforts to get grassroots responses going will be stymied at that juncture if the webpage doesn't work.

As you clearly seem to be aware, if you ask the average person, they adamantly do not want all their channels of communication to be owned by a few large corporations -- even if their understanding of why this is not a good idea can be colored by misunderstanding or personal interests. And as you also seem to be aware, the view inside the Beltway doesn't seem to square with that of the "average person" out beyond megalopolis. As one speaker noted, however, we really worry that everything that was said yesterday was just "preaching to the choir," and that the commissioners who were not present are the ones that will make sure the cap is raised or eliminated, no matter what the "average person" knows or thinks.

I have tried unsuccessfully to post the following comment via the ECFS page at the FCC website, because I was unable to enter it into the discussion yesterday.

Thank you again, and my hearty good wishes for a good outcome in June.

Priscilla Coit Murphy, Ph.D. (in media history)
Chapel Hill, NC

Comment: "The cap on the number of stations and papers any one corporation can own should be LOWERED not raised nor, certainly, eliminated. Information is not a commodity -- it is the fundamental blood and breath of a democracy, because we voters depend on the communication media for all the information we receive about our community and our country. We cannot be a fully informed electorate if we only receive a controlled part of what we need to know. The large media corporations have demonstrated amply that they cannot be trusted to treat information as anything other than a commodity to be packaged and sold with other commodities. We the voters depend on the FCC as the only remaining protector of our ability to get all the information we need -- not just that which Disney or Clear Channel is willing to provide.

"We will be watching in June to see whether the electorate or the corporate giants will be the beneficiaries of your crucial decisions.

"The stunning lack of more public forums around the country like the one yesterday in Durham is deplorable, moreover, and suggests strongly you have forgotten for whom you govern."

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